CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

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on Thursday, 6 June 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Miss Tessa A.H. Solesby (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 594th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Several distinguished visitors have come to the Conference today to address us at a time of important developments in disarmament, as shown by new initiatives of particular relevance in that field on which I am sure we shall hear more at this plenary meeting. On behalf of the Conference, I welcome all our visitors. I am convinced that their statements will constitute a substantial contribution to our work and to the consideration of the complex issues of disarmament in general.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Honourable Douglas Hogg, QC MP, was elected to Parliament in 1979 as the member for Grantham. He has held parliamentary positions of responsibility, having been appointed an Assistant Government Whip from 1983 to 1984. He has also held high Governmental posts as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office and Minister of State at the Department of Trade and Industry. He was appointed to his present post in November 1990 and since then has been closely following the work of the Conference.

The Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Her Excellency Helga Hernes, is addressing the Conference for the second time. She has a well-known academic background and has published several books on a variety of topics, including, of course, international relations. She is a member of the Governmental Board on Disarmament and Arms Control and of the Defence Commission, and has been appointed twice to her present high position in the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I also wish to welcome the presence among us, once more today, of our esteemed colleague Ambassador Maj Britt Theorin, the representative of her country in the Conference and Member of Parliament, as well as Chairman of the Swedish Disarmament Commission.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Dr. Taro Nakayma, will also be addressing the Conference today. We expect his arrival to coincide approximately with the conclusion of Ambassador Theorin's statement. We shall then have a brief recess, to allow me to receive the Minister in accordance with the practice of this Conference. We shall then resume the plenary meeting and listen to his statement as well as those of the other speakers inscribed today.

I have on my list of speakers today the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, the Honourable Douglas Hogg, the State of Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Her Excellency Helga Hernes, the representative of Sweden, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Dr. Taro Nakayama, as well as the representative of France. I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the Minister of State for foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, the Honourable Douglas Hogg.

Mr. HOGG (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): As the United Kingdom has the honour of holding the Presidency of this Conference, it is for me a very particular pleasure to speak here today. As you have said, Madam President, all the work of this Conference has our whole-hearted support but we do attach particular importance to the achievement of a chemical weapons ban - the urgency of which has been impressed on all our minds by the circumstances of the Gulf war. I shall refer to this later in the course of this statement.

Last year we celebrated the end of the cold war - that confrontation between East and West. It must not be replaced by new confrontations, between North and South or between one Southern country and its neighbour: events in the Gulf have changed our perceptions as to what can be achieved by collective and consensual international action: this has a direct relevance to arms control and to the process of disarmament.

The last 12 months have seen the culmination of an unprecedented era in arms control negotitions: the signature of the CFE Treaty; the CSCE summit in Paris; the likely signature of the START treaty in the near future; and the successful implementation of the 1987 INF Treaty. Now that the CFE Treaty has been signed, all the signatories to that Treaty need to look at further ways of improving stability in Europe.

I have of course referred to success in Europe, but that is in stark contrast to the rising threat elsewhere. The Gulf war should have punctured any euphoria which might have been created by the easing of East/West tensions. The military policies of Iraq have highlighted the dangers of proliferation: the proliferation of chemical weapons, the proliferation of biological weapons, the spread of nuclear weapons and of ballistic missiles and the related question of arms transfers and the arms trade. Of course the fundamental answer lies in finding political solutions to the underlying problems but at the same time we must recognize the importance of arms control accords which by creating conditions of greater confidence, help to bring about the necessary long-term political agreements.

Iraq's massive accumulation of arms has focused international attention on the arms trade. But we need to be clear-sighted. Arms sales are not inherently reprehensible, for countries have a right to defend themselves. But suppliers must exercise greater responsibility in the supply of armaments and not just to the Middle East.

The Gulf crisis has demonstrated the need for greater restraint in the supply of conventional weaponry. One element highlighted by the British Prime Minister, John Major, is the need for greater transparency in the global-arms trade. We look forward to receiving the report of the United Nations Secretary-General's expert study group on this issue. We hope their work will provide the basis for a decision at the coming General Assembly to establish a universal United Nations register of arms sales. Such a register has already been endorsed by the 12 members of the European Community

(Mr. Hogg, United Kingdom)

and the United States Government. It would enable the international community to monitor the scale of arms build-up in any one country, for without knowledge, policies of restraint cannot be effective.

We must take all possible measures to reduce and, if possible, eliminate the risks posed by nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and by the ballistic missile systems which can deliver them. Export controls can play an important part in slowing down the rate of proliferation because, if effectively enforced, they can make it more difficult for countries to obtain the equipment and technology with which to develop these weapons.

Some countries are already making efforts to improve and harmonize their national export controls. The Nuclear Suppliers Group met in March to discuss the implementation of its guidelines. The membership of the Missile Technology Control Régime has recently been expanded by the accession of new States parties. The Australia Group is working to increase the effectiveness of its controls on chemical and biological materials. In December last year the United Kingdom held a seminar in London on chemical-weapons-related export controls.

But two important provisos: first we must not jeopardize developing civil, especially chemical industries in the third world; secondly, in supplier countries, industries need to be assured that they can conduct their trade with other countries under fair and equal conditions there.

Of course the most important means available to us to control nuclear proliferation is the non-proliferation Treaty. We warmly welcome the recent announcement by President Mitterrand that France has decided in principle to accede. The accessions of Zambia and Tanzania are also very good news.

With the lessons of the Gulf war in mind, it is important that we should make the most of the opportunity offered by the biological weapons Convention review conference in Geneva this September to strengthen that Convention. The United Kingdom will have a number of proposals to put forward, in particular in the area of confidence-building measures and verification. And we will study carefully ideas from other States parties.

I would like to turn now to the major and wide-ranging contribution to arms control made by the Conference on Disarmament. We believe the issue of nuclear testing remains best handled here in the Conference on Disarmament. That is why we supported the establishment of a mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban last year. I reaffirm our adherence to the partial test-ban Treaty, our compliance, though we are not a party, to the threshold test-ban Treaty, and our commitment to a comprehensive test ban as a long-term objective, reached on a step-by-step basis in the context of general and complete disarmament. The United Kingdom will continue to contribute to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

(Mr. Hogg, United Kingdom)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space and the banning of radiological weapons are also difficult but very desirable objectives. My Government contributes to the discussions of these subjects, and to the continuing work on negative security assurances, with the hope that realistic and substantive progress can be made.

The area in which the Conference on Disarmament can make the most significant contribution to global arms control at the present time is the negotiation of a chemical weapons convention. The most effective long-term answer to preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons will be the agreement of an effective global ban. The very real threat of the large-scale use of chemical weapons during the Gulf war should now spur us on to complete the task as soon as may be. We support the proposal by President Bush that we should all aim to resolve the major outstanding issues by the end of this year and complete the convention ready for signature by the middle of 1992. We recognize that this is a very ambitious target. However, it is also a very important and valuable one for it would rid the world of a particularly repugnant weapon; it will serve to reaffirm the positive benefits of international cooperation in matters of global security and therefore we will play a full part in the achievement of these objectives.

One of the key issues yet to be resolved in the negotiations for the chemical weapons convention is that of verification. In 1990, my predecessor, William Waldegrave, presented the results of a series of practice challenge inspection exercises we had carried out at government facilities in the United Kingdom. Our main conclusion, one that we commend to all parties, was that there is no site so sensitive that we could not allow some form of access within it. We found that it was possible to reconcile the degree of instrusiveness necessary for effective verification with the protection of necessary legitimate security interests. However we had not, then, included an inspection of a civil chemical site in such practical exercises: here there is a real problem of commercial confidentiality. We therefore decided to carry out such an inspection in order to check whether managed access techniques were applicable and I have the honour today to table a paper, CD/1080, which describes the main lessons from the work we undertook.

We came to the following conclusions: First, that although a breach of the convention would be more difficult to detect at a civil site than at a military site, a wide-ranging inspection would present a significant risk of discovery to an evader. Second, the need to present legitimate commercial confidentiality can be reconciled with the requirements for extensive access. Third, the system of managed access previously developed at sensitive government facilities worked well, with suitable adaptation, in the industrial context. These conclusions have reinforced our view that a system of challenge inspection for both civil and military sites, intrusive enough to represent a real deterrent to evasion, is practical and achievable. Our conclusion remains that effective verification is crucial for the convention and that challenge inspection is the key to effective verification. Without a rapid and intrusive inspection system, the convention would lack the instruments necessary to make it an effective arms control measure.

(Mr. Hogg, United Kingdom)

Although challenge inspection is the key, it is not the only method of verification being developed, and we welcome the new proposals put forward by Sweden for an integrated approach to the routine verification of the chemical industry. We believe these proposals are a step in the direction of a more practical, economic and better-focused régime. Much work still needs to be done on this issue, but the integrated system does offer a positive way forward.

Some other important issues must also be tackled rapidly and imaginatively if a convention is to be ready for signature in 12 months' time. The organization of the convention must be cost-effective and must be funded by a clear and equitable system of contributions. An effective decision-making procedure must be created to oversee its efficient implementation. The benefits of joining, flowing from enhanced security, must outweigh those of staying out - this to encourage wide adherence. A procedure for penalizing States parties in breach of the convention, especially those which use chemical weapons, needs to be developed and parties must act together to prevent non-members from acquiring the means to make chemical weapons.

So, to sum up, we want an effective convention that will not only ban chemical weapons, but deter even the most unscrupulous régime from ignoring that ban in future. Such a convention is now within our grasp. Let us together ensure that we complete it.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom for his statement. I now give the floor to the State Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Her Excellency Helga Hernes.

Mrs. HERNES (Norway); Let me at the outset congratulate you, Madam President, on the assumption of your duties as President of the Conference for this month. It is a particular pleasure for me to see an outstanding representative of the United Kingdom, a friend and a neighbour across the North Sea, presiding over our work.

We are meeting at a time of both promise and uncertainty. The cold war order of confrontation and rivalry lies in ruins. As yet we do not know exactly what is to take its place. At this point the proverbial new European architecture is essentially a fairly rough and incomplete blueprint.

The heady optimism that was typical of the period immediately following last year's CSCE summit has been replaced by a more sober approach. On the whole, that may not be such a bad thing. Visions are important. But they must be tempered with realism. Grand designs are no longer promoted with the same vigour. It is increasingly clear that the construction of a stable new European order of peace will be a slow and painstaking process and that progress will be interspersed with setbacks.

(Mrs. Hernes, Norway)

The CFE Treaty is of great historic importance. Once ratified and implemented it will contribute decisively to diminishing the military dimension of what used to be the East-West rivalry. It will provide for conventional stability at significantly lower levels of forces. It will largely eliminate capabilities for surprise attack and large-scale offensive operations.

The CFE Treaty must clearly be seen as a cornerstone of the new European architecture. It must therefore be implemented faithfully, in keeping with its letter and its spirit. There is a fundamental principle involved here, of course. Treaties freely entered into must be observed. Pacta sunt servanda. Anything less would have a devastating impact on the process of international cooperation.

Against this background my Government notes with relief and satisfaction that the impasse over article III of the Treaty now seems to have been resolved. Removing the last obstacles to ratification and implementation of the Treaty is a major achievement.

It will pave the way for bringing the ongoing CSBM and CFE IA negotiations out of the present impasse. It will also make it possible to indicate preparations in the near future for the next stage of conventional arms control, involving all the 34 participants in the CSCE process. As we see it, a decision to start preparing for the new negotiations could be taken at the upcoming Berlin meeting of the CSCE Council of Ministers. A mandate should be ready by the end of next year's CSCE follow-up meeting, so that the new negotiations may start immediately following that.

As for the substance of the new negotiations, we could not a priori exclude the possibilities of further cuts in conventional arms. But beyond that a key objective of the next stage of conventional arms control in Europe should be stabilizing measures designed to supplement and underpin reductions. Forces should be restructured in a clearly defensive way. From our point of view it is particularly important to deal effectively with conditions in border areas. Measures should be pursued that would curtail offensive military capabilities and deployments in areas close to neighbouring States.

There is general agreement that the CSCE process must be a key element of the new European architecture. To that end, the process must be strengthened and adapted to the changes that have taken place in Europe. The Paris CSCE summit provided basic guidelines for strengthening the CSCE. The challenge now confronting the 34 CSCE States is that of adding flesh and blood to the skeleton. The basic structures created in Paris must be made capable of functioning effectively and of dealing effectively with the problems Europe is likely to face in the 1990s. Of course these problems will probably stem not so much from military confrontation as from ethnic tensions and conflicts related to minority and nationality issues, as well as from economic and social disparities and environmental hazards.

(Mrs. Hernes, Norway)

Some highly useful first steps have been taken. From our point of view, however, it is essential that the fledgling CSCE structures be made capable of reacting quickly in case of emerging conflicts or crises. To that end, it is our view that a decision should be taken at the Berlin meeting of the Council to establish an emergency mechanism, making it possible at short notice to convene meetings at sub-political level in situations of emerging conflict or major disruption. Furthermore, it will in our view be necessary to strengthen the CSCE Conflict Prevention Centre by charging it with functions related to the prevention and resolution of conflicts of a political nature, under the guidance and supervision of the Council of Ministers.

The CSCE process has proved successful in reducing tensions and increasing stability in the European context. A broad regional approach such as this could be fruitful in other regions as well. It is, however, a prerequisite that due account be taken of the specific characteristics of each region. We must also remember that it took more than 20 years to arrive at the Paris Charter.

In recent months and weeks we have witnessed developments which should create new opportunities for the multilateral disarmament process. With all its tragic aspects, the war in the Persian Gulf has placed the problems connected to the existence of weapons of mass destruction higher on the international political agenda.

Furthermore, the Gulf war has shown that the United Nations and the international community can act with determination. This opens up new and promising prospects. An important contribution to this process is the Special Commission established in accordance with Security Council resolution 687. Norway is fully committed to the objectives of this resolution and is actively participating in its implementation.

The Gulf war has also dramatically underlined the urgent need to restrain the sale of sophisticated conventional weapons. We feel there is a need for initiating an international dialogue with a view to agreeing on rules for exports of such weapons. The Norwegian Government is in the process of looking into these questions.

In light of this, we very much welcome President Bush's initiative to limit the arms race in the Middle East. The current situation in this region poses unique dangers and opportunities. Halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons will require the cooperation of the States in the region, and around the world. Proliferation is a global problem for which a global solution must be found.

President Mitterrand's broad plan for disarmament contains valuable ideas also in this field. His proposal for a meeting of the five permanent members of the Security Council to discuss measures of restraint in international arms transfers merits support as the permament members are the leading exporters of conventional arms, and we of course very much welcome the announcement that France is now ready to join the non-proliferation Treaty.

(Mrs. Hernes, Norway)

Let me also express our support for Prime Minister Major's initiative concerning a United Nations register for arms exports and imports which was elaborated upon in the statement we have just heard from the Minister of State, the Honourable Douglas Hogg.

During the last couple of years many of us have nourished the hope that the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention would soon be brought to a successful conclusion. Successive chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons have spared no effort in trying to reach the final stage of the work of the Conference on Disarmament towards a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons. But despite progress on more technical issues and considerable improvement of the draft text of the convention, this final stage has so far seemed out of reach.

Norway therefore wholeheartedly welcomes President Bush's chemical weapons initiative of 13 May which we hope will bring the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention to an early and successful conclusion. The decision by the United States Government to accept unconditional prohibition of use and total destruction of all its chemical weapons within the first 10 years of the convention is indeed of great importance. We are confident that the negotiations will make full use of the new United States positions to regain the momentum necessary to conclude the convention within a reasonable period of time.

We also support the process of a package approach started by the present chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Batsanov of the Soviet Union, which demonstrates the interrelationship between problems related to security, verification and organizational issues, in our view the most important ones remaining in the negotiations.

We are fully aware, however, that important and complex issues still remain unresolved. The issue of verification of non-production is one such issue. Again, with the necessary flexibility on the part of all parties, progress should be possible on the basis of recent proposals, inter alia by the Swedish delegation. In this context we support the proposal for a ministerial meeting convened at an appropriate time to solve the outstanding political issues. Such a meeting would have to be well prepared and open for participation by countries other than the present 30 members.

Let me also underline the importance attached by my Government to the need for openness and transparency with regard to chemical weapons. All chemical-weapon States should provide information about the location, composition and size of their stocks. Similarly, all countries not in possession of chemical weapons should make declarations to that effect.

Norway will continue her research programme on verification of alleged use of chemical weapons. This programme was initiated in 1981 and is carried out by experts at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment. This year's report is the tenth in the annual series of research publications in this field. A working paper giving a summary of this year's report is being issued

(Mrs. Hernes, Norway)

as document CD/1078, and each delegation will receive a copy of the report itself in the near future.

Within the framework of the present research programme, the Norwegian Government has decided to invite scientists and scholars from developing countries for training in methods of verification of alleged use of chemical weapons. We feel it is important to draw as many countries as possible into this cooperation.

The achievement of a total and permanent ban on all nuclear testing is another important Norwegian disarmament objective. In our view, a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is essential in order to halt the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons effectively. The Conference on Disarmament is the appropriate forum for dealing with this issue.

I would like at this juncture to emphasize the concern of my Government about the environmental and health risks associated with nuclear testing. This is an additional reason to discontinue all nuclear tests.

There seems to be general agreement on the goal of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, but there are divergent views on how to achieve this goal. In our endeavours towards this end, the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban established by the Conference has an essential role to play. We will need to agree on various specific and interrelated issues before a test-ban treaty can be concluded.

I also think we agree that an effective system of verification is a main prerequisite for a successful, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Norway attaches great importance to the work of the Group of Scientific Experts and their GSETT-2 experiment, testing a global network for exchange of seismic data as the most important basis for a future system of verification of a test-ban treaty. Norway is actively participating in this global data exchange experiment by providing data from her seismic array stations through the Norwegian Seismic Array (NORSAR).

As the GSETT-2 experiment is approaching its final stage, we should now give careful thought to the question of how to proceed with the technical aspects of the verification issues. Important tasks still remain for the GSE in preparing for the future treaty as far as seismic verification is concerned. The future activities of the Group could also be extended to other means of verification relevant for a CTB treaty.

Finally, I would like to touch on a question of a different character, but nevertheless of great significance to my Government, namely the question of extension of the membership of the Conference. Norway has been the endorsed candidate of the Western Group since 1986. Yet the decision of the Conference in 1983 to extend the membership of the Conference by no more than four members has not been carried out. We therefore hope that the Conference will be able to take a decision on this issue during this session, thus allowing for Norwegian membership in 1992. We are on our part ready to assume all the responsibilities that full membership entails.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the State Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Norway for her important statement and for her kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Theorin.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): Madam President, it is a great pleasure for me to see you presiding over our proceedings. My delegation rests assured that the Conference will greatly profit from your effective discharge of this important task, and I am very pleased to see a female President of this Conference. It is another sign of the increasing role of women in an area which has traditionally been dominated by men.

My delegation wishes to express our gratitude to the preceeding President, Ambassador Batsanov of the Soviet Union, for his distinguished contribution to the Conference as its President.

I have listened with great interest to the important statements by the two previous speakers, the Minister of State, the Honourable Douglas Hogg of the United Kingdom and the State Secretary Dr. Helga Hernes of Norway, and I look forward very much to the statements by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Dr. Nakayama, and the distinguished representative of France, Ambassador Errera.

When I last spoke in the Conference on Disarmament, the air war in the Gulf had just started and overshadowed everything else on the international agenda. The air war in the Gulf lasted for a month and a half; the ground war was over in 100 hours. Still, in this short time more weapons were reportedly used than in the protracted Vietnam war. It may have been the most intense air war in history. It has been estimated that some 250,000 individual weapons were dropped by aircraft - or roughly 6,000 weapons a day - including some 60,000-80,000 cluster bombs, scattering 12-16 million "bomblets".

The war had disastrous effects that will be long-lasting. Large numbers of people were killed - perhaps as many as 200,000 - or wounded, the natural environment was severely damaged and hundreds of oil wells are still on fire, water supplies and other vital social functions still disrupted.

Armed hostilities in the Gulf have come to an end. Yet, we have still to fathom the full implications of this war. We continue to receive new estimates of the human casualties in the war. We continue to be reminded of the social misery and the persecution of minorities in the aftermath of the war. We continue to receive assessments of the physical havoc and environmental damage caused by the war.

What can be learnt from this war? One lesson to be learned from the military build-up in the region, as I said in my statement here in January, is that the international arms trade has to be limited. International control of all arms trade is urgently called for. It must apply to all States, both arms exporters and importers. Another lesson to be learned from the acute menace of chemical warfare is that chemical weapons must be destroyed once and for all and that a total ban on chemical weapons must be concluded urgently.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The central role of the United Nations in the post-war setting is potentially of great significance. This development has given added weight to the overriding objective of the United Nations "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". It may herald a qualitatively new stage in the evolution of norms for international conduct and global peace-building.

There is now widespread agreement that we must intensify the negotiations here in Geneva to completely ban chemical weapons. Who stands to lose by their elimination? Nobody. All countries and all peoples would gain in security if a total ban were achieved. My Government welcomes President Bush's announcement of a shift in United States chemical weapons policy. Acceptance by the United States of both a total ban on the use of chemical weapons and the total and unconditional destruction of existing stocks of chemical arms constitutes a long-awaited breakthrough in the negotiations.

No delegation claims any more that the right of retaliation in kind should be part of a future chemical weapons convention. Throughout the negotiations on a chemical weapons ban, the Swedish Government has consistently advocated a total and unconditional prohibition of use, valid under all circumstances. No delegation insists any longer on the option of retaining certain quantities of chemical weapons after the destruction period - a policy my delegation has viewed with profound concern, as have many others.

I am confident that the removal of these well-known obstacles implies a fundamental change in the negotiating process. I am confident that it will contribute to added momentum in the negotiations and the speedy conclusion of the chemical weapons treaty.

Let us be clear, nonetheless, that there is still a heavy workload ahead of us. Essential issues of a highly political character remain unresolved. Verification is one of them. Constructive proposals for the conduct of inspections on request are needed. The crux of the matter is to strike a balance between the legitimate security concerns of States parties and the necessity of having an efficient verification régime which inspires confidence that the convention is being complied with.

As far as the verification of the chemical industry is concerned, constructive work has been carried out in Working Group B of the Ad Hoc Committee. The unified, cost-effective verification régime that has been suggested, which also covers chemical-weapons-capable facilities, seems to contain several elements that could lead to a final settlement. An expanded obligation to declare industrial facilities should be seen as a measure for creating greater confidence among States parties.

In this phase of intensified work and reconciled divergencies, a final settlement of the issues of technological cooperation and of protection and assistance should be within reach. It would be a mistake for any delegation to wait until the very last moment to actively seek a solution of these

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

outstanding issues. Quite the contrary. We should now press ahead. At this promising juncture, an intensification of the work of the Committee is the correct prescription. Without further delay, capitals must supply delegations with instructions flexible enough to permit us to achieve a complete draft treaty text ready for signature within a year.

Chemical weapons were not actually used in the Gulf war. On the other hand, the perceived threat of the use of chemical weapons was real. In order to eliminate the chemical weapons menace, all chemical weapons should be banned and destroyed - everywhere. Sweden strongly supports the United Nations Special Commission set up in accordance with Security Council resolution 687. In this connection, my Government puts special emphasis on paragraph 14 of resolution 687, which states that its implementation represents "steps towards the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery and the objective of a global ban on chemical weapons".

The establishment of the Special Commission is entirely in line with the central role of the United Nations in safeguarding international peace and security accorded to the world organization in the Charter. My delegation hopes that the practical experience of the Special Commission with the physical destruction of chemical weapons, and the international coordination of this vast undertaking, will have a favourable impact on the negotiations here in Geneva.

The war in the Gulf has also served to remind us that general disarmament efforts must be reinforced by effective non-proliferation measures. In this context, the non-proliferation Treaty, with more than 140 States parties, is the most important disarmament treaty ever signed. Since it entered into force more than 20 years ago, no country has proclaimed itself a nuclear-weapon State. I welcome the decision in principle by France to join the non-proliferation Treaty and urge all other non-parties to do likewise. It is encouraging in this connection to note the reports of an understanding between the Soviet Union and the United States concerning the implementation of the agreement to reduce conventional forces in Europe and improve prospects for an agreement on considerable reductions of their strategic nuclear forces in the near future.

A special non-proliferation responsibility rests with countries that have the technologies and know-how for certain civilian products which may also be used for the production of weapons of mass destruction. They must ensure that these products and components are not used or made available for military purposes. Accordingly, the Swedish Parliament recently approved legislation on the export control of products and components which can be used for the production of weapons of mass destruction, for example chemical and biological weapons, as well as missile systems. This legislation will enter into force on 1 July this year. Our legislation is not discriminatory against trading partners with peaceful and civilian purposes only, but it discriminates against those who want to produce or possess weapons of mass destruction. And that, of course, is precisely the purpose of this legislation.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

More than any conflict in the past, the war in the Gulf has highlighted the ramifications of the international trade in conventional arms. Most of the weapons in Iraq's arsenals had been supplied by members of the opposing international coalition and, as a result, in the war they were turned against their very producers and suppliers. The international arms trade has facilitated excessive arms build-ups. At the same time, many nations depend on arms imports to satisfy legitimate defence requirements. International limitation of arms transfers has traditionally been a very sensitive issue, but in the last few years perceptions have shifted - and recently rather markedly. One manifestation of the new trend is the fact that the United Nations is in the process of carrying out a study on international transfers of conventional arms, which is due to be completed this summer. Another indication is the increasing ambition among a number of countries to regulate and limit the international supply of missiles and technologies for certain weapons of mass destruction.

More dramatically, however, the war in the Gulf set in motion processes leading to a recent worldwide surge in attention to this issue. A number of Governments - including some which have voiced considerable scepticism in the past - have expressed their commitment in various forums to the international limitation of arms sales, including here in the Conference on Disarmament. A corresponding interest has also been expressed by both non-governmental organizations and ad hoc groups of statesmen. One case in point is the "Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance", which recently proposed that the monitoring of world arms trade, particularly by the United Nations, should be strengthened with the purpose of eventually agreeing on global norms, regulating and limiting trade in arms, and focusing on both supplier and recipient countries.

All in all, international interest in limiting the arms trade is probably greater now than ever before. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. We should take maximum advantage of this growing new international interest in, and wider acceptance of, limiting arms transfers. An international régime should be set up, therefore, under the auspices of the United Nations to limit and control military trade. In order to be comprehensive and not discriminatory, such an arrangement should be global in scope. In order to be viable, this régime should involve both suppliers and recipients.

Experience shows that efforts to strengthen cooperation may enhance "negative" arrangements, such as control, limitation or prohibition. The ambition to limit military trade should, therefore, be coordinated with simultaneous peace-building, peace-keeping and confidence-building efforts. Regional limitations on military trade and certain weapons and military technologies is not an alternative approach, but a possible complement which may serve to reinforce a worldwide régime. As a topical case in point, we note with interest the United States' Middle East arms control initiative. The objective of the international régime should not be to prohibit, but rather to considerably limit military trade. Such limitations would be a major achievement, and should not undercut the inherent right of any nation to self-defence.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The approach of the international régime should not be discriminatory between different suppliers and recipients. Furthermore, in order to be comprehensive, an international régime should cover not only military goods, but also military services and know-how. It should encompass provisions for an information exchange not only on military trade, but also on military production. Arms-producing and exporting countries should enact effective national legislation to limit and control their respective military exports and production. Effective national control of military production would facilitate governmental control and limitation of military trade. Such national control should not cause problems for producers and exporters complying with applicable rules and regulations.

All States, whether predominantly military exporters or importers, should cooperate with this international régime under the auspices of the United Nations. Such a régime must be supported by appropriate verification provisions and mechanisms. To outline, and reach agreement on, such arrangements is a major undertaking which can be expected to take quite some time to achieve. Yet we do not have to start from scratch. A great deal may be learnt from recent agreements on reducing and destroying conventional and nuclear weapons, and from the experience gained in the negotiations on the verification of a total ban on chemical weapons. In order to be feasible in the short term, a régime should proceed gradually. As a first step, the United Nations should establish a clearing-house for information on military production, exports and imports. All Governments should supply the United Nations with comprehensive statements of their military production, exports and imports. The United Nations should compile and keep a register of these reports, and regularly make this register available to all its Members.

In terms of armed hostilities, the war in the Gulf is over. Nevertheless, the Gulf war continues to present the world community with new challenges. I have sought to outline a threefold challenge, amplified - though not created - by this war: the need for international limitation of the transfer of conventional armaments; the need for a speedy conclusion of a total ban on all chemical weapons; and the need for disarmament, peace and security in Iraq and the entire region.

But peace is more than the absence of war. In building peace, our aspiration must not be limited to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In building peace, we must also - as the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations goes on to say - reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. We must establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained. We must promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sweden for the contribution that she has just made and also for the kind words that she has addressed to me. I would like now to give the floor to the representative of France, Ambassador Errera.

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): First of all, Madam President, allow me to express the great satisfaction of my delegation at seeing you presiding over our Conference. We all know the distinguished role you have been playing at the head of the United Kingdom delegation, the personal and devoted contribution you are making every day to the cause of disarmament and the authority that has earned you widespread respect. I also wish to convey my congratulations to your predecessor, Mr. Batsanov, on the exemplary way in which he discharged his duties as President of the Conference. I should also like to express my gratitude to the colleagues who at an earlier stage were kind enough to welcome me to this forum, and in turn I should like to convey my greetings to those ambassadors who have just joined us, and all my wishes for success to those who have left us. Finally, I listened most carefully to the statements made by the Minister of State of the United Kingdom, the State Secretary of Norway and the Ambassador of Sweden. I should like to thank them for the comments they made on the recent initiatives taken by my Government.

As you know, on 3 June the President of the French Republic outlined a plan for arms control and disarmament, which my delegation has submitted as an official document of the Conference in document CD/10.79, and which has been circulated by the secretariat. The underlying idea of this plan, which falls within the framework of France's collective thinking with its partners following the war in the Persian Gulf, is that the international situation offers a historic occasion to halt the uncontrolled build-up of arms. France feels a special responsibility which has led it to take a comprehensive initiative in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and the control of arms transfers.

The spread of increasingly costly and destructive weapons systems is exposing the world to growing dangers. Inequalities, injustices and the imbalance of forces are conducive to threats, the arms race, and conflicts of all kinds. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction gives a global dimension to these dangers. The whole world, South and North alike, has a vital interest in halting this race and in checking this dangerous and ruinous proliferation. This concerns us all.

Hence our aims are clear. Chemical weapons must be eliminated. Bacteriological weapons must not be produced. Existing nuclear arsenals must be reduced to the lowest level consistent with the maintenance of deterrence. The non-dissemination of nuclear weapons remains an imperative, whereas the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is justified. The dissemination of ballistic technologies must be strictly controlled in so far as they may be used for aggressive aims. On the other hand, there is no reason to prevent cooperation in space for civilian and scientific purposes.

As regards the so-called conventional weapons, a balance of forces should be maintained, or introduced, everywhere, region by region, while respecting the right of all States to security. Arms exports are consequently to be strictly controlled and so conducted as not to contradict this action. France

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has already made these goals its own, and is prepared to subscribe to any improvement in existing arrangements, to any new international or multilateral commitment based on them. It has already started thinking about this issue with its partners in the European Community.

As the French plan indicates, global arms control and disarmament presupposes action at three levels: the weapons category level, the regional level and the worldwide level. First, at the weapons category level. The international community must give specific treatment to each weapons category, proceeding in stages if necessary. In order to achieve clearly-defined goals binding on all, France, which is constantly concerned to adapt its own regulation, proposes that concrete measures, sector by sector, should soon be taken.

As regards the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons: the entire international community, meeting at the Paris Conference in January 1989, acknowledged the need to complete as soon as possible the convention banning chemical weapons which has been negotiated by the Conference on Disarmament. France proposed convening the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in Geneva at ministerial level to conclude the negotiations before the end of the year. It will spare no effort to reach that objective. It calls on all States to become parties to the convention from the outset.

As regards the prohibition of bacteriological weapons: At the Review Conference of the 1972 BW Convention in September of this year, France will propose the addition of a protocol on verification.

Nuclear disarmament remains an essential goal. France supports the efforts to reduce the nuclear arsenals of the two major Powers. It confirms that it will participate in the process as soon as the conditions it outlined to the United Nations General Assembly have been fulfilled.

At the same time, it is important to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons beyond the present five nuclear Powers.

France, which is already applying all of the terms of the non-proliferation Treaty, has in principle taken the decision to sign it and hopes that all States will accede to it.

The Missile Technology Control Régime (MTCR), which allows those now in possession of missile know-how to limit the risks of ballistic proliferation, should only be a stage towards a more general agreement. Such an agreement, geographically more extensive, better controlled and applicable to all, would lay down rules promoting civilian cooperation in space, while removing the dangers of the diversion of technology for developing a military ballistic capability. Here again, the aim would be to arrive at a situation where all States wishing to gain access to space for development purposes would cooperate in a framework guaranteeing security.

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France further recommends the development of outer-space confidence-building measures in the form of a "code of conduct" for civilian and military satellites, as it has already indicated, specifically in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

As regards conventional weapons: Conventional weapons exports must not counteract the search, region by region, for a balance of forces at the lowest possible level consistent with the right of each State to security.

The five permanent members of the Security Council - which happen to be the principal producers of conventional weapons - are to start a round of concertation in Paris in the coming weeks aimed at determining rules of restraint. This concertation could then be broadened on the occasion of the next session of the General Assembly, with a view to establishing an international register of arms sales to be kept by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Particular attention will be given, in the course of these discussions, to sales of conventional weapons in parallel markets.

The members of the European Community have already begun a process of concertation aimed at making proposals on this subject.

After weapons category objectives, I should like to turn to regional objectives. The example of Europe on this point is encouraging. The Europeans have moved on from the cold war to peaceful coexistence, and now to cooperation within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). They have adopted and applied security and confidence-building measures. They have signed the first disarmament agreement concerning conventional weapons, which France is happy to see can at last be ratified. In this regard, the Conference is already familiar with the documents submitted by my delegation (the Charter of Paris and the Declaration of 22 States - CD/1043 and CD/1044), the Austrian delegation (the Vienna Document - CD/1070 and Corr.1) and the delegation of the Netherlands (the CFE Treaty - CD/1064). This experience cannot be transposed as such. But it does show that the arms race is not inevitable, and this approach could in our view serve as an inspiration for other initiatives in other regions.

Hence we call for regional security arrangements based on the following rules:

We are convinced that only when the solution of conflicts is started, can this process get underway and confidence be created.

We favour the adoption by the parties concerned of regional confidence-building and security measures. Information is the prime condition of confidence. Transparency and confidence-building measures, i.e. mutual information on force capabilities and strengths, and on the movements of armed forces, reduce the sense of threat and paves the way for disarmament proper. For that, a framework is needed, which may be a regional organization, and means of inspection in situ and by satellite are needed. France would be willing to disclose information available to it to regional

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agencies responsible for transparency. It would favour the transmission to such regional agencies of the means of observation, in particular those in outer space that may be available to Europe and the United Nations.

We consider that efforts must be made, through regional decisions and through negotiations, to move towards a balance of regional forces. Arms export policies must not run counter to this goal. Once this equilibrium has been attained, its level should progressively be lowered through negotiations providing for means of control.

There is a need for the strict regional application of the category régimes laid down for nuclear, bacteriological and chemical (NBC) weapons as well as ballistic missiles. That is why, at the initiative of France, United Nations Security Council resolution 687 on the cease-fire in the Gulf conflict noted that the specific constraints imposed on Iraq as regards nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as ballistic missiles, represented steps towards the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles, along with a global ban on chemical weapons. That goal should be pursued in other regions of the world.

Lastly, the third aspect is the worldwide aspect. The United Nations is now in a position to fully play the role it was assigned by its Charter. France considers that it is therefore for the Security Council to guarantee and, if necessary, to harmonize these disarmament and non-proliferation policies. The Council must encourage the signature of agreements on particular arms categories, as well as regional and multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. From the agreements reached, it would derive general rules and thus exercise a function of worldwide vigilance.

This presupposes that the members of the Security Council and in the first place its permanent members will set the example.

This is the essence of the plan submitted by France. My Government felt it important to place it before the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body entrusted with negotiating disarmament agreements on behalf of the international community, as soon as possible. Several aspects of this plan fall directly under our agenda items and my delegation will provide clarifications on these proposals in due course. Other elements could contribute to our joint consideration of these matters, either within the context of the current agenda or a renewed agenda in the future.

The upheavals that have occurred in international equilibria, be this in East-West relations or those between North and South on our planet, open up new opportunities; they also impose upon us greater obligations - first of all that of preventing war and creating the conditions for a fairer and more secure world. Rest assured, Madame President, that France will not fail in its responsibilities.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for introducing the important initiative by his Government, as well as for the kind words he addressed to me.

As announced at the opening of this plenary meeting, we shall now have a brief recess, to allow me to receive His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, who will be with us very shortly. May I invite members to be available in this conference room at 11.40 a.m., so that we can resume the plenary on time?

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.40 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 594th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

I take pleasure in welcoming, on behalf of the Conference, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Dr. Taro Nakayama. The Minister has had a distinguished political career, during which he has held high positions as member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Upper House, where he has served three times for nearly seven years, and as Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office, in addition to a number of other posts of responsibility in the Government. He was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in August 1989 and this is his first visit to the Conference, following that paid by his distinguished predecessor, the late Shintaro Abe, who addressed us in June 1984. Mr. Abe's visit is well remembered and I am sure that of His Excellency Dr. Taro Nakayama will be as well. I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Dr. Taro Nakayama.

Mr. NAKAYAMA (Japan) (translated from Japanese): It is a great pleasure for me to have the honour of addressing the Conference on Disarmament, a forum with a distinguished history.

First of all, on behalf of the Japanese Government, I should like to take this opportunity to express my high respect for our President, Ambassador Solesby, under whose excellent leadership, backed up by her brilliance and rich experience, we are meeting here today. I should also like to express my high respect for all the distinguished delegates at this Conference, for their important and painstaking efforts in trying to bring the world closer to the achievement of our disarmament goals.

Attending this Conference, I cannot but help recall the time seven years ago when, in the same month of June, Mr. Shintaro Abe, whom I respect as a senior statesman and diplomat of Japan, attended and addressed this Conference as the first Foreign Minister of Japan to do so.

I have two reasons for mentioning this. First, former Minister Abe, whose untimely decease was regretted by many in Japan, and I used to share a deep understanding and beliefs on various matters related to arms control and disarmament. Having assumed my present post in August 1989, I have been

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directing the conduct of Japan's foreign policy in these years of drastically changing world relationships. I have visited various nations and discussed with many world leaders the problems related to the future direction of mankind. Through such talks I have endeavoured to promote world peace, arms control and disarmament, as a contribution in these fields is one of Japan's basic foreign policy objectives. At the same time, I have become even more convinced of the importance of these objectives. Therefore, it has been my strong desire to have an opportunity to come here and attend this Conference in order to share ideas with you.

The second reason for recalling the visit of former Minister Abe arises from the striking contrast between the world of 1984 and the present. On the one hand, when we look back at the past seven years, the extent of the changes that took place in international relations, which indeed surpassed anybody's imagination, becomes apparent. On the other hand, it becomes clear that peace and disarmament were matters of urgent concern in 1984 as well as today. When we take into account these two aspects, the future direction of arms control and disarmament may become discernible.

With respect to international relations, the year 1984 found itself in the midst of severe tension between East and West, between the United States and the Soviet Union. Reflecting this situation, arms control and disarmament efforts were bound to meet with frustration, despair and grave concerns. Then, as is well known, the latter half of the 1980s witnessed the beginning of a change in East-West relations in part due to changes in the Soviet Union, after the arrival of President Gorbachev on the political stage. The change in East-West relations has been dramatically accelerated in the past year or two by such events as the democratization of East European States and the crumbling of the Berlin Wall that symbolized the "iron curtain", whose fall led to the unification of Germany and the signing of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. The change that took place was truly historic and epoch-making. Furthermore, the Gulf crisis that broke out under such changing international relations has demonstrated how the international community, centred around the United Nations and assisted by the cooperative relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, can successfully and unanimously deal with an aggressor State. This example may herald the beginning of a new era in the international political sphere.

Every transitional period in history is accompanied by the predominant factors of instability, uncertainty and the lack of transparency which arise out of the breakdown of the old framework and the complex interplay of old and new forces. Unfortunately, this common fact seems to be present also at this time of history. In the field of arms control and disarmament, the change in East-West political relations has borne fruit in the form of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. However, it is a fact that in the course of half a year after the signing of the Treaty up to the recent agreement concerning its implementation at the United States-Soviet foreign ministerial meeting, the process for its ratification has been complicated and delayed due to some important issues that had arisen. Similarly, the START negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, after entering into the final stage, are hanging uncertainly with regard to the timing of their conclusion.

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In addition, the experience of the Gulf crisis clearly has demonstrated to all of us the need for urgent and serious arms control and disarmament efforts in two areas. The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles is one such area, although this is an area where efforts have already been made to some extent in the past. The international transfer of conventional arms is another such area, however, where no concrete steps have been taken in the past in spite of repeated discussions on the matter from various angles.

Other serious issues requiring solution have also emerged in connection with the implementation of disarmament measures. For example, what should be done about the question of the transfer of arms from one region to another as a result of disarmament arrangements in the former region? What are the security implications of such a transfer to the latter region? What about the ecological problems resulting from the destruction of chemical weapons?

Thus, we find ourselves in the midst of a transitional period where sweeping changes in international relations are taking place. Achievements in the arms control and disarmament field, facilitated by such changes in international relations, have to be made irreversible and pushed further ahead. Unaccomplished tasks left over from the past should be brought up in order to find solutions in the new context. It is a time when all the persistent and indefatigable efforts on our part are required for that purpose.

Precisely for this reason, I believe that the role of the Conference on Disarmament has become more important than ever before, and that the world's expectations for this forum have risen to new heights.

Here in Geneva, one may recall the fact that the Conference on Disarmament, in contrast to its productive years in the 1960s and 1970s, has failed to produce a single disarmament treaty in recent years. On the other hand, it is also a fact that in these same years an epoch-making endeavour has been made assiduously in order to draw up a chemical weapons prohibition convention. This endeavour is truly epoch-making as the convention is to be equipped with a strict and complex verification régime and the negotiations are in fact approaching the final stage. Now that the cold war, which could have delayed the negotiations, is becoming a thing of the past, the time is ripe for new achievements. The goal must be achievable and should be achieved. If and when we succeed in concluding a multilateral disarmament convention with the active participation of developing States, the accomplishment will have no less significance than the recently concluded bilateral and regional disarmament agreements. This accomplishment would also be a significant instrument in bridging the perception gap between developed and developing nations with regard to the approach and the progress of the disarmament process. In this sense, the Conference on Disarmament is now being challenged to prove its raison d'être.

I should now like to take up the question of weapons of mass destruction, with which the work of the Conference on Disarmament is closely linked. Considering the time and the place, it would be only natural to begin with the problems of chemical weapons, upon which I have already touched.

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More than 60 years have passed since the use of chemical weapons was banned by the Geneva Protocol, and more than 20 years since chemical weapons became a subject of this forum. Precisely when the negotiations to eliminate these inhumane weapons appeared to be approaching the final stage, the Gulf crisis broke out. The threat of the use of these very weapons by Iraq heightened the desire of the international community for the early conclusion of the convention to a level never reached before. It is now imperative to conclude the long-standing negotiations as early as possible, without losing the momentum created by the Gulf crisis. I sincerely hope that all the delegates here will make all-out efforts for this purpose.

In this connection, the latest position of the United States announced by President Bush represented a courageous undertaking aimed at global elimination of chemical weapons. Japan heartily welcomes this initiative.

I am aware that there are some proposals for the Conference on Disarmament to be convened at the ministerial level in order to give political impetus to the negotiations. Basically, I am in agreement with the idea, because this may be the way to achieve a breakthrough in some of the pending important issues and to expedite the negotiations. However, such a ministerial conference would not be able to achieve its expected objectives unless issues requiring political solutions are sufficiently narrowed down and crystallized, paving the way for appropriate political settlements. As for myself, I will be willing to attend such a ministerial conference and do my best, if all the delegates here, who are top disarmament negotiators of the respective nations, prepare the ground with the utmost care and if they ask for such a ministerial-level exercise by consensus.

With regard to this, I should like to make a proposal. Perhaps we should consider convening a meeting in Geneva at the level of high officials from nations' capitals. This may become appropriate at a certain advanced stage of the negotiating efforts. Such a meeting at the level of high officials, possibly before the end of this year, may help in moving the negotiations a step further and help in the planning of a ministerial conference.

Of course, whatever the level of a meeting or a conference may be, it would be difficult or even unrealistic to try to draw up a convention that would be 100 per cent satisfactory to all the States parties. Therefore, in putting forward my proposal I should like to urge all States to demonstrate a spirit of compromise to the maximum extent, fully realizing the ultimate goals of the convention. This would be indispensable for the early conclusion of the negotiations.

In conjunction with the new moves I have just mentioned, which are meant to facilitate breakthroughs in the negotiations, it would be important for the Governments of States parties to the negotiations to seek understanding and cooperation from their nationals concerning this convention. Only in this way can nations ensure the smooth implementation of the convention in their territories, including the effective and reasonable implementation of verification and inspection measures. For this purpose, it would also be

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important for Governments to study and carry out practicability exercises. From this viewpoint, my Government is planning for the second time to carry out a trial inspection of facilities dealing with chemicals to be limited by the convention during the current fiscal year. Through the experience and insight to be acquired in this trial inspection, we should like to make a contribution to the establishment of a reliable verification and inspection system.

I should also like to touch upon the question of the universality of the convention. Unfortunately, there is no panacea that would ensure universal adherence to the convention. Each nation will have to accede to the convention on the basis of its political commitment to eliminate chemical weapons from the surface of the Earth. In this sense, it would be important to prepare a convention that would convince all nations that their security would be enhanced by acceding to it. With respect to those nations which still refuse to accede to the convention, it would be important to continue diplomatic efforts of persuasion and to make them realize the high costs they would have to pay by remaining outside the convention. With all the wisdom we have gathered and will gather, we must come up with a formula that will meet these requirements.

As I have been explaining, Japan is for the early conclusion of the convention, and, as was announced during the last session of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, Japan will become one of the original signatory States of the convention. On this occasion, I wish to express the hope that all those States that have not done so will make similar announcements, and that all the States possessing chemical weapons will make announcements admitting the fact. By doing this, we can give the convention firm ground on which to stand and build confidence in the idea of the elimination of chemical weapons.

In this connection, the task of the elimination of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons now being carried out by the United Nations Special Commission, consisting of experts from various nations, of which Japan is one, is indeed a momentous task. It will serve, let us hope, as a valuable experiment upon which the future elimination of chemical weapons under the convention may be modelled. The task of the Special Commission will be full of difficult technical and financial problems, including the question of the prevention of harmful environmental effects. Japan is willing to contribute in an appropriate manner to the carrying out of the task of the Special Commission.

I feel obliged to raise, as the next topic, the issue of nuclear weapons, of which the dangers of proliferation were brought home to our minds afresh during the Gulf crisis. I feel obliged because, as the only nation against which atomic bombs were used, Japan has a serious interest in the non-proliferation and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

As is well known, the non-proliferation Treaty is one of the greatest achievements having come out of this multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Today, in order to strengthen the NPT régime, urgent efforts have to

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be made on two fronts, in promoting accession to the Treaty by non-parties, and in securing full implementation of the treaty obligations. As to the first front, Japan has been making démarches to non-parties over the years, whether they are nuclear-weapon States or not, to accede to the Treaty. In this regard, we welcome and highly regard the decision by France to accede to the NPT in principle, and strongly hope that this will promote early accession by other non-parties to the Treaty. As to the second front, Japan intends to make concrete proposals to IAEA and other appropriate forums to increase the effectiveness of IAEA safeguards system, because the need for its strengthening was one of the lessons learned from the Gulf crisis. At the same time, Japan is strongly urging one of the States that has not yet concluded a safeguards agreement with IAEA to do so. Furthermore, in connection with the two-fronts efforts I have just mentioned, Japan adopted and announced a policy in early April to the effect that, in extending official development assistance, the trend in the recipient country of the development and production of weapons of mass destruction and missiles will be taken into account, in order to strengthen efforts to prevent the proliferation of these weapons.

The nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, adhered to by more than 140 States, has contributed to the maintenance of peace and stability in the world. In view of the importance of the NPT régime, Japan strongly supports a substantial extension of the treaty beyond 1995. At the same time, recalling the oft cited discrimination between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in this Treaty, such discrimination will have to be abolished gradually through further sincere efforts towards nuclear disarmament on the part of nuclear-weapon States - gradually because it is a fact that the peace and stability of the world today still continue to rely upon deterrence and the balance of military power, including nuclear weapons.

Turning to the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban, which is one aspect of nuclear disarmament, we may recall the fourth NPT review conference of last year, where arguments were made that there should be a linkage between the realization of a CTB and the extension of the NPT. What has to be taken into consideration is not only the question of a CTB, but the overall progress of nuclear disarmament. In this context, I highly value the full implementation of the INF Treaty, and strongly hope for the early conclusion of the START treaty as well as its further continuation in the new round of talks on United States-Soviet nuclear disarmament. Of equal importance is progress towards the next stage of the United States-Soviet nuclear testing limitation talks. In addition, the three other nuclear-weapon States, aside from the United States and the Soviet Union, may be asked to seriously address the question of nuclear disarmament. Also, I should like to remind the Conference that Foreign Minister Abe proposed in 1984 a step-by-step formula as a way to achieve a CTB. Japan continues to uphold the proposal as the most realistic choice in pursuing a CTB within the framework of overall nuclear disarmament.

In this respect, I should like to pay a high tribute to the resumption of substantive work by the nuclear test ban Ad Hoc Committee that was re-established last July at the Conference on Disarmament after a seven-year interval. Ambassador Donowaki of my country chaired the Ad Hoc Committee

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last year. This year again, I am told, the Committee is engaged in a lively in-depth discussion of the subject under the chairmanship of Ambassador Chadha of India. May I express the hope that, through a dialogue between the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, common understanding will be deepened? Based upon such understanding, I hope that concrete and feasible steps will be discussed in order to bring us closer to the final goal of a CTB.

I should also like to say a few words about the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts of the Conference on Disarmament created for the purpose of establishing a seismic verification system that would supplement a nuclear test ban. Japan, as one of the nations with advanced seismology-related technologies, including seismic detection technology, has been actively participating in, and contributing to, the work of the Group over the years. I have high respect for the work of the Group. This year, the Group is to carry out GSETT-2 - the second large-scale test of the global data exchange system as a critical test in their search for the establishment of an international underground nuclear test detection network. I hope that the test will meet with success. At the same time, may I express the hope that the Conference will give full consideration to possible future tasks to be taken up by the Group of Scientific Experts?

Last week the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues was held in the ancient capital of Japan, Kyoto. The main theme of the Conference was "A post-cold-war and post-Gulf-war international system challenges to multinational disarmament". A number of participants from both abroad and Japan, including cabinet ministers and some of the ambassadors present here, participated in lively discussions. Prime Minister Kaifu personally took the initiative to host the Conference in Japan, attended the Conference and delivered a speech. This was in realization of the renewed importance of such issues as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the international transfer of conventional weapons as a result of the Gulf crisis. In other words, one may say that, as the East-West confrontation relaxes and as regional conflicts become less likely to be regarded as proxy conflicts between East and West, the danger of the outbreak of regional conflicts may be increasing. Under such circumstances, we have been reminded of the importance of the question of how to deal with the proliferation and transfer of weapons. I am confident that the Kyoto Conference will serve as a catalyst in stimulating arms control and disarmament discussions here at the Conference on Disarmament, as well as at the United Nations and other forums.

I should like now to take up the question of the international transfer of conventional arms, which became one of the important themes at the Kyoto Conference. Japan announced in March of this year a package proposal entitled "Japanese near-term responses to the problems in the Middle East". With respect to the issue of the international transfer of conventional weapons, the proposal made clear that, first, Japan would contribute, mainly within the framework of the United Nations, to the activities related to establishing standards and rules, including a reporting system to the United Nations, with a view to enhancing the transparency and openness of arms transfers. Second, Japan made clear its willingness to call on nations exporting conventional

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weapons to consider improving and strengthening their legal and administrative frameworks for voluntary restrictions on exports of such weapons. The former proposal is based upon the realization that, in cases where there is a dangerous accumulation of arms beyond the need for self-defence, enhanced transparency and openness of arms transfers may serve the purpose of an early warning to the international community of a dangerous situation. This may be regarded as an information measure to prevent regional conflicts. Also, this may be a form of confidence-building measure, and in a broader sense one of arms control issues. The latter proposal is based upon the realization that an excessive accumulation of conventional weapons in a certain region, upsetting the military balance and threatening the outbreak of an armed conflict, ought to be prevented by the voluntary restraint of nations mainly on the supply side of arms. They may be regarded as one of the practical measures to prevent regional conflicts within the framework of arms control issues.

As is well known, measures to increase the transparency of arms transfers is a subject currently under study by a group of experts, including one from Japan, in accordance with a United Nations General Assembly resolution introduced by Colombia and other Member States in 1988. The result of their study will be presented in the coming session of the United Nations General Assembly. As was stated in the above-mentioned initiative, and also as was clearly stated by Prime Minister Kaifu at the Kyoto Conference, Japan intends to submit to the United Nations General Assembly, at its next session, a draft resolution that would contribute to establishing standards and rules, including a system of reporting to the United Nations of the international transfer of conventional arms. In this draft resolution the report of the United Nations study group will naturally be taken into account. Furthermore, I understand that this problem was also discussed during the United Nations Disarmament Commission's last session in New York, and that the United Kingdom made a valuable proposal regarding the establishment of a United Nations data registration system on arms transfers. It would be useful for nations sharing the same idea to get together and come up with a joint draft resolution. In addition, Japan will be ready, should the need arise, to contribute in an appropriate manner to the upgrading and expanding of the database system of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs so that the database will be able to cover data on arms transfers as well.

As to the question of the export of conventional weapons, I took it upon myself to raise the issue of self-restraint with the foreign ministers of major arms-exporting countries. Compared with the question of weapons of mass destruction, views of nations are more divergent on the question of the international transfer of conventional weapons. Therefore, it is my belief that the most realistic approach to this question should be to begin with the consideration of the strengthening of the self-restraint mechanism on the part of arms-exporting States.

In this sense, I highly value the Middle East arms control initiative announced last week by President Bush as a courageous attempt to tackle the intricate issue of arms transfers. The initiative calls for the establishment of guidelines for restraint and of a consultation mechanism among the

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five leading arms-exporting countries. Japan wishes to see an early materialization of the initiative by the five States. At the same time, Japan considers it important that in the future other major arms supplier States will also participate in the new restraint system, and that its scope will be expanded globally. Japan, as a nation that has long been strictly controlling arms exports on the basis of what we call the three principles of arms exports, will do its utmost in contributing to international efforts aimed at the achievement of such a goal.

The final point I should like to raise concerning the issue of arms transfers is the importance of solving political confrontations and conflicts in individual regions in question. Needless to say, the conclusion of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which is the first treaty in the field of conventional weapons disarmament since the Second World War, became possible only after the sweeping changes in the structure of East-West political confrontation. Nations possess military power and stand against each other as a reflection of political confrontation. The CFE Treaty has eloquently proved that it is possible to decrease military confrontation in proportion to the degree of the solution of political confrontation. That is to say, in order to promote arms control and disarmament measures substantially in any given region, including the issue of international arms transfers, it is indispensable to resolve political confrontation. The resolution reduces to a large extent the incentive for countries importing conventional weapons to acquire arms.

It should be said that the transfer of conventional weapons is closely linked to each country's right to self-defence. Indeed, conventional weapons are already widely spread. Furthermore, there is a trend for the proliferation of manufacturing capabilities of such arms. There is a limit, one has to admit, to what can be done in this field. Therefore, from my experience as a student of medical science, I think it vitally important to apply both symptomatic treatment and eradicative cure in such a case. In other words, we must apply what may be termed symptomatic treatment, such as increasing the transparency of transfers of conventional weapons and exercising self-restraint in arms exports. Together with this, there is a need for diplomatic efforts to solve political issues. The latter may be regarded as the eradicative cure aimed at improving body conditions. Application of both methods must be the only way to deal with the problem. Japan is determined to continue both forms of efforts in cooperation with other countries.

I have just tried to analyse recent developments in the world and describe Japan's position on problems in the field of arms control and disarmament which require urgent action. At present, with the cold war receding the world is entering an important period of establishing a new international order. Having experienced two world wars, the entire world community of the twentieth century is still faced with the great and challenging task of how to build an international order of peace and stability. This new international order should guarantee a free, creative and prosperous society, long dreamt of by mankind. We are still in a period of transition with intermingled light and dark patches. However, we may say that

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we are beginning to hear the steady beating of such an international order. Recalling that the approaching twenty-first century is the first chapter of the new millennium or even of the following millenia for mankind, I tremble with the thought of our great responsibility to our progeny. Recognizing these historic perspectives and responsibility in this place today, should we not continuously and patiently strive to accomplish our noble tasks in arms control and disarmament during the remain precious decade before the turn of the century?

I am determined to continue these efforts in cooperation with you.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan for his important statement and also for the kind words which he addressed to me.

As you know, the Prime Minister of Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Robert J.L. Hawke, AC MP, was inscribed to address the Conference today. Unfortunately, he had to cancel his visit for reasons relating to his high responsibilities. However, the Prime Minister has addressed a message to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Komatina, and I would like to invite Ambassador Komatina to read this message.

Mr. KOMATINA (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): The message addressed by the Honourable Robert James Lee Hawke, Prime Minister of Australia, reads as follows:

"I write to advise you that I will not be able to visit Geneva to deliver my address to the Conference on Disarmament on 6 June.

"I had been very much looking forward to putting my vision both of the challenge that now lies before the Conference and of the achievements which, I believe, are within its reach. Most importantly, I wanted to urge the members of the Conference to move quickly to conclude a convention that will rid the world of chemical weapons. I regret that I will not now have this opportunity.

"I believe that I have a duty to stay in Australia to oversee a number of matters which must be dealt with after the political events here over the past few days.

"I am sorry that it has become necessary to cancel my visit at this late stage. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

"I wish you well in your important deliberations."

Here ends the message, and I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Prime Minister for his message through the Ambassador of Australia.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for reading out the message of His Excellency the Prime Minister of Australia. May I ask the representative of Australia to transmit to His Excellency the Prime Minister our appreciation for his interest in the work of the Conference?

May I now turn to other matters? The secretariat has circulated today an informal paper containing the timetable of meetings to be held next week by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies. As usual, the timetable is indicative and may be amended, if necessary. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I wish also to draw your attention to a draft letter to be addressed to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of States non-members which are not participating at present in our work on chemical weapons. As indicated in the draft, that letter will be signed by myself, as President of the Conference, and by Ambassador Batsanov, in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I discussed the draft letter at the presidential consultations held yesterday and found that there was agreement to despatch the text as drafted. I have to add that, since then, we have noticed a very small editorial mistake in the first paragraph. Since this was drafted, the number of non-member States participating in our work has happily increased and the number should now read 35 instead of 34, so we will make that change if we may. If I hear no objection, I shall proceed as I have just described.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General will transmit the communication, with a covering note, to the Permanent Representatives accredited to the United Nations Office at Geneva or to those Embassies having jurisdiction over the international organizations which have their headquarters here.

That concludes our business for today. You will recall that, in accordance with the timetable of meetings of the Conference for this week, we should hold today, immediately after this plenary meeting, an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 3, entitled "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". However, it is clear that time is now becoming rather short, especially since, as you know, there is a luncheon given in honour of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. May I therefore come back to the suggestion I made at the end of the informal meeting last week, namely, that the informal meeting scheduled for today be held next week? We would then take up, on that occasion, agenda item 3, as

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well as the subject originally proposed in the timetable adopted today, i.e. agenda item 2, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". I hope that this arrangement will be acceptable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I intend now to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 13 June, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.